

Make Memorial Day Plans! Pennsylvania COVID Restrictions to Be Lifted

Article By:

Theodore J. Zeller III

Over a full year after restrictions were put in place to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and exactly one month after capacity limits were raised to 75%, Governor Tom Wolf announced on May 4, 2021, that (almost) all the COVID-19 mitigation orders will be lifted beginning 12:01 a.m. on Memorial Day, May 31. However, one of the COVID restrictions in Pennsylvania will remain in place: an order to wear a mask while in public. This announcement came less than two hours after New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy announced all outdoor gathering limits would be lifted on May 19, and the capacity limit on indoor restaurants and bars also will be lifted, so long as social distancing can be practiced.

Pennsylvania COVID Restrictions to Be Lifted

This announcement, released by Gov. Wolf in conjunction with the Pennsylvania bipartisan COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force, means there will no longer be restrictions on the capacity for either indoor or outdoor seating at breweries, restaurants, bars, and similar facilities, or on the capacity for indoor and outdoor gatherings. Although Gov. Wolf's announcement promises relief for the state's beleaguered restaurant industry, bars and restaurants must maintain compliance with the April 4 capacity restrictions of 75% ([if self-certified](#)) for just a couple more weeks.

As for the mask mandate, the Pennsylvania Health Department stated the order requiring people to wear masks while away from home will be lifted once 70% of Pennsylvanians aged 18 and older are fully vaccinated. That percentage stood at nearly 42% on May 4, according to federal data, while 63% of those 18 and older had at least one dose. But Pennsylvania did revise the mask-wearing order prior to this announcement to bring it in line with new federal recommendations that say fully vaccinated people don't have to wear them outside anymore unless they're at a crowded event.

Make Memorial Day Plans!

Importantly, the Wolf administration noted the state's lifting of restrictions does not prohibit municipalities or school districts from continuing with their own more aggressive measures if they so desire. Officials for the City of Philadelphia are reviewing this plan of restrictions being lifted for Memorial Day, but no changes are definite just yet. It is unlikely that Philadelphia will conform with Pennsylvania's lifted restrictions. Philadelphia has set its own standards, so beginning Friday, May 7,

restaurants in Philadelphia can finally go to 50% capacity for indoor dining, or 75% capacity if they meet certain ventilation standards.

Progress in the battle against COVID will allow us to raise a toast to our fallen vets this Memorial Day.

©2025 Norris McLaughlin P.A., All Rights Reserved

National Law Review, Volume XI, Number 125

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/make-memorial-day-plans-pennsylvania-covid-restrictions-to-be-lifted>